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EXPONENT OF AHMADIYYA ISLAM AND OF ITS WORLD-WIDE REVIVALISTIC ACTIVITIES.

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Editor

NUR-UD-DIN MUNEER M. A

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Hazrat Khalifatul Masih's Friday Sermon

In his Friday Sermon given in the Aqsa mosque, Rabwah, on April 14, 1978, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih exhorted the congregation to do their best to serve humanity. He said, this was what the Holy Quran had enjoined upon Muslims in the verse :

كنتم خير امة اخرجت للناس

"You are the best people, raised for the good of mankind, you enjoin good and forbid evil and believe in Allah". (3 : 111).

He said that the moral qualities enumerated in this verse should form the bedrock on which the moral stature of a Muslim should rest. He should inculcate in himself the noble qualities of treating others with sympathy and kindness, doing good to others and enjoining upon them to do good and he should practise them faithfully throughout his life.

Continuing he said that efforts to do good to others could be made both individually and collectively. The collective efforts in this respect could further be divided into those made by governments of various countries. Elaborationg the point further, he said that Governments

Hazrat Mirza Nasir Ahmad
Third Successor of the
Promised Messiah

make laws and launch plans for the welfare of their subjects. They try to ameliorate the condition of their people as it is their duty to provide for the well being, peace and happiness of their subjects The people should also co-operate with their governments. They should abide by its laws and honour its pledges with them. Only through such a mutual participation real good can come out

for the people and the governments, he stressed.

He said some people obeyed the laws of their land and co-operated with the government merely for pushing forward their own interes·s. No good could come out of such self seeking policy. He said that Ahmadis were law abiding citizens and fully co-operated with the government. They did not do it out of any ulterior motive. Rather it was an article of faith with them. They strictly believed in the dictates of the Holy Quran regarding establishing peace in the land and eschewing everything illegal which might provoke disorder in the country and disaffection among the people.

He said every Ahmadi wants to win the pleasure and love of Allah. It is the sole object of his life. According to the Holy Quran Allah does not love the mischief makers. So every Ahmadi keeps away from such things as might cause some mischief in the land. He cannot even think of participating in anything wich may lead to the breaking of some law. This is the reason that by the grace of God Almighty, Ahmadis are in general not involved in any law breaking activities. It is possible, however, that some people might try to involve them in litigation on some framed charges. In this case also no Ahmadi should take the law into his own hands and must seek redress under the law. If some body persecutes him, he shonld turn to Allah for deliverance.

Turning to the moral and spiritual turpitude gripping the world of today, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih said that Ahmadis were called upon to change this deplorable condition. He said that the mankind was now in torments. It was suffering acutely from its spiritual maladies. A large part of it was worshipping three Gods instead of One. Another portion was bowing before idols or worshipping their own base desires. In the circumstances the best treat which Ahmadis could give them would be redeeming them from the dirt of polytheism and making them their partners in seeking the love and protection of the One True God.

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Dwelling upon the point further, he said that lifting mankind from its earthly moorings and installing it on an heavenlv pedestal was a noble task and required corresponding efforts for its fulfilment. The efforts needed to be made were of two kinds. Firstly, placing before them the arguments which could conclusively prove the falsity of their stand and secondly, showing them heavenly signs which could convince them of the existence and powers of Allah Almighty.

He said that both thcse requirements had been provided to mankind by Allah through the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him). The arguments were contained in the Holy Quran which is the last and the perfect Book of Divine Laws. The heavenly signs were manifested by the Holy Prophet (Peace and blessings of God be on him) and after him through his medium and grace, his followers have been doing so.

It was now upto Ahmadis, he concluded to present these arguments and heavenly s gns to the ailing humanity and so to cure their spiritual ills. They should help them to enter the fold of Islam and so become deserving of the love and protection of Almighty Allah and to live in peace on this earth.

(English rendering by Nur-ud-Din Muneer)

International Conference on Deliverance of Jesus

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In the first weak of June 1978, The London Ahmadiyya Mission is holding an International Conference on the deliverance of Jesus. We gave some particulars of this conference in our January issue. Below are given some more particulars. (*Ed.*)

THE VENUE

The Commonwealth Institute at Kensington High Street, London, has now been reserved for the International Conference in the theatre with gallery seating for 420 people on Friday and Saturday 2nd and 3rd June 1978 from 10.00 a.m. to 6.00 p.m. with cafeteria facilities at 12.30 p.m. In addition, a nearby boardroom which can accommodate 100 people has also been reserved to provide facilities should there be an overflow of attendance. The Central Galleries and Hall have been hired for Hazrat Khalifatul Masih's address on Sunday 4th June, 1978 which can accommodate up to 2,000 people seated and standing in the aisles. Cafeteria and toilet facilities will be available throughout the duration of the Conference.

SPEECHES

Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III has kindly approved the following speakers and speeches to be addressed at the Conference:

(a) Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross-Quranic and Islamic Evidence.
Mr. Abdus Salam Madsen of Denmark

(b) Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross-Biblical Evidence.
Mr. B. A. Rafiq

(c) Travels of Jesus after the Incident of the Cross.
Mr. Sheikh Abdul Qadir of Lahore

(d) Authenticity of the Tomb of Jesus at Srinagar, Kashmir.
Prof. F. M Hasnain of Kashmir

(e) Ministry of Jesus (God or Man)
Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan

(f) The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel
Mr. M. M. Ahmad from Washington

(g) The Authenticity of the Holy Shroud
Mr. Andreas Faber-Kaiser of Spain

(h) Theses have also been received from the following scholars and these will be read out by one from the London Jama'at :

(i) *Mr. Kurt Berna of West Germany*

(ii) *Dr. Ladislar Filip M.D. of Czechoslovakia*

LITERATURE

The following books have been commissioned for publication on this occasion.

(a) Jesus in India *by the Promised Messiah*

(b) The Deliverance of Jesus from the Cross
Sir Mohammad Zafrullah Khan

(c) Where Did Jesus Die ?
J. D. Shams

لكل داء شفاء
(تلخيص حديث نبوی)

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Ahmadiyya Youth Camp in Britain

The first Ahmadiyya Youth Camp in Britain was held in Huddersfield on March 23 to 27. The object was to enjoy an outing and to promote the idea of religious education. The plan of the excursion was conceived and executed by a committee appointed by Mr. B. A. Rafique, Imam of the London Mosque. Early in the morning after supplications to God Almighty, the excursionists left the London Mosque in a hired mini-bus and reached Huddersfield, some 225 miles away in the evening. Maulvi Anis-ur.Rahman, Ahmadiyya Missionary, Huddersfield received them. During the journey tape records of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih's speeches and also of some poems regarding Ahmadiyyat were played and thoroughly enjoyed.

Mr. B. A. Rafique, Imam of the London Mosque, Mr. B. A. Orchard Ahmadiyya Missionary in Scotland, Mr. Nasim Ahmad Bajwa, Missionary in Haunslow had also joined. All of them benefited the youth gathering with their words of wisdom.

During the trip Night Prayers were daily offered in congregation. The Missionaries led the service by turns. Similarly, they conducted the Dars of a part of the Holy Quran after Morning Prayers. The Assembly then, would recite the Holy Quran themselves before starting some other programme.

On the next day, a special meeting was held by the missonaries to deliberate the ways and means of streamlining missionary activities in England. In his Friday Khutba, Mr. Bashir Rafique Imam of the London Mosque, pressed the congregation to follow the example of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him), in every sphere of their lives.

After Friday and Asr Prayers, the youth group visited the HAREWOOD HOUSE, some 25 miles away from Huddersfield. The palace, the property of the Queen's maternal brother, built by Edwin Laselles in about 1765, is a Treasure house of rare and invaluable chandelliers and paintings. Some of them are valued at millions of pounds. It has a garden in it of great beauty and attraction. Birds and butterflies of almost all species are kept in this garden. It has also a spacious library having very rare books. Everyone enjoyed the visit fully.

After Isna Prayers on the same day the excursionists held a meeting in which various issues were discussed. The questions posed by the members were answered by the missionaries.

On March 25, the youth Group reached Manchester in the afternoon and joined in the celebrations of the Promised Messiah Day in a rented Hall. Some 300 Ahmadis coming from Yorkshire and Lancashire, participated in the meeting. Speeches were made on the excellent qualities of the Promised Messiah. The Assembly was exhorted to serve Islam and mankind, the work for which the Promised Messiah was raised. The following missionaries addressed the

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gathering. Mr. Bashir Rafique, Imam of the London Mosque, Khwaja Munir-ud-Din Shams, Naib Imam of the London Mosque, Mr. B.A Orchard, Incharge Missionary, Scotland, Mr. Nasim Ahmad Bajwa, missionary Huddersfield.

The execursionists then started on their back journey to Huddersfield where they reached at 12 p.m., after a miraculous escape from falling in a Khud. Next day, on March 26, a trip was made to the Lake district which is known for its beauty spots and natural sceneries. It reminds one of the Eternal Beauty of Almighty God Who has created such superbly beautiful things.

On March 27, the Caravan reached back in London in the evening. (Report by : Khawajah Munir-ud-Din Shams, Naib Imam, London mosque).

Sierra Leone Mission

Activities

In a meeting with a Lebanese friend, held in the latter's house, the meanings of the verse Khatamun-Nabiyeen came under discussion The Ahmadi Missionary Mir Abdul Majid explained that Ahmadis believed firmly in the verse and did not detract even a jot from the status of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him). However, he clarified that the verse did not preclude coming of follower prophets after the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him). Such prophets would come solely for the revival and re-establishment of Islam and would be servants of The Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him). He further elucidated that the Holy Prophet himself had interpreted the verse in a like manner. If no prophet was to come after him, he would not have prophesied of the coming of the Messiah, nor would he have stated after the death of his own son Ibrahim, "If he had remained alive he would have been a prophet" (Majah, Kitab al janaiz), and "Abu Bakr is the best of men after me except that a prophet should appear". (Kanz).

Gambia Ahmadiyya Missions Annual Convention.

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Gambia Ahmadiyya Mission celebrated its Annual Convention on March 26, 1978. The Minister for Health, the Honourable Mr. M. C. Fellow chaired the inaugural session. In his presidential address he praised the work done by the Ahmadiyya Mission in the spheres of Education and Medical Service. A large number of Ahmadis and non-Ahmadis participated in the Jalsa from the length and breadth of Gambia and also from Senegal. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih III, had sent a special message for the occasion which was read out in the conference. During the Jalsa 6 persons joined the Movement.

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Ahmadiyya Movement in Sierra Leone

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by Maulvi M. Siddique Amiritsari

It was in 1914 that Ahmadiyya literature began to pour into Sierra Leone by which people came to know what Ahmadiyyat stands for. Mr. Musa Garber of Freetown accepted Ahmadiyyat and sent his baiat by post to Hazrat Khalifatul Masih at Qadian; and since then a regular communication developed between Qadian and some Sierra Leone Muslims. As a result Hazrat Maulana A. R. Nayyer visited Freetown in 1921. He was the first Ahmadiyya Missionary to land in the country He preached the Gospel of Islam there for a few days before proceeding to Lagos. The next visit to Freetown was paid by late Alhaj Maulvi F. R. Hakeem in 1929. However, it was in 1937 that the late Alhaj N. A. Ali was sent to Sierra Leone to work as a permanent missionary and to establish a regular Mission there. By God's grace his efforts were crowned with success and besides a faithful community in Freetown, a good number of branches were established by him in various towns in the Protectorate. Besides him, the following missionaries hitherto have worked or are working in Sierra Leone:

1. Maulvi M. Siddique Amritsri for 20 years.
2. Maulvi N.A. Chaudri for 7 years.
3. Maulvi M. I. Janjua for 4 years.
4. Maulvi M. I. Soofi for 6 years
5. Maulvi Abdul Haq for 2 years.
6. Maulvi B.A. Bashir for 7 years
7. Maulvi M. I. Khalil for 9 years.
8. Maulvi M. Usman for 4 years
9. Maulvi Abdul Karim for 3 years
10. Maulvi Mohammad Siddique Gurdaspuri 10 years.
11. Maulvi Ghulam Nabi Malik for 10 years.
12. Maulvi Ahmad Shah for 2½ years
13. Maulvi M. A. Saqi for 1 years.
14. Maulvi N. D. Ahmad for 3 years.
15. Maulvi M Sadiq for 9 years.
16. Maulyi S.U. Sial for 2 years.
17. Manay others.

The present Amir and Incharge of this Mission is Maulana Nasim Saifi B.A.

The Centre of the Movement

The centre of the Sierra Leone Ahmadiyya Mission has been at Bo upto 1964, where the Mission has a Central Mosque. two Mission Houses a Secondary School, an elementary School, a Printing Press, a Boarding House for students and a Library and Reading Room. A monthly Journal the African Crescent is also run by the Mission from here.

Bo is the second largest and modernised city of Sierra Leone and being almost in the centre of the country and serving as the capital of the Protectorate, in some respects it is considered to be even more important and attractive than Freetown.

Other important Ahmadiyya centres besides Bo are Magburaka Rokupur, Bado Balama, Kenema and Boajibu. The Head Office of the Sierra Leone Mission is now in Freetown.

Mosques and Schools

We have at the moment about 45 mosques and about 90 Organised branches, many elementary and Secondary schools throughout the length and breadth of Sierra-Leone.

Masih-i-Maud Day in Sri-Lanka

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The Promised Messiah Day was celebrated in Nogombo and Colombo on March 23 and 26 respectively, speeches were made and articles read about the Mission and status of the Promised Messiah ; about the renaissance of Islam effected by him and about his successful endeavours for making it prevail over the whole world.

Ahmadiyya community, since its inception in Siri Lanka in 1915 is making great strides towards progress. It has produced huge literature in Tamil and sinhalese for the propagation of Islam. It is running since 1917 a Tamil monthly for dissemination of Islamic teachings. Since 1948 another monthly, "Islamic Sunrise" is also serving the cause of Islam. The community in Siri Lanka was established in 1915 by Hazrat Sufi Ghulam Ahmad, a companion of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him).

Sahibzada Mirza Mubarak Ahmad

He directs at present the affairs of the Tahrik-i-Jadid, Anjuman Ahmadiyya (Pakistan) of which he is the Chief Director. In that capacity he controls the Movement's various Missions outside the Indo-Pak Sub-continent and in this connection has visited most of the European countries, the U.S.A., Middle East, Hong Kong, Thailand, Japan, Philippines, some countries of West Africa and Malaysia as well as Indonesia.

A New Mosque in Ghana

A despatch from Moulvi Abdul Wahab bin Adam, Ahmadiyya Missionary Incharge, Ghana, reveals that a spacious mosque, newly built in central region, Ghana, was recently inaugurated in his country. The elite of the city including the paramount chief participated in the ceremony. The mosque has been built at a cost of C. D. 150,000/- (Ghanian Pounds).

THE PROMISED MESSIAH AND JESUS CHRIST

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By Nur-ud-Din Muneer M.A.

In our last issue we examined one of the reasons for which the general body of Muslims now decries Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of Qadian as a Kafir i.e., the abrogation of Jehad. We showed from his own writings that it was an absolutely false charge. He never abrogated Jehad. In fact he had no authority to do it. According to his own proclamations he had come to fulfil the law of Quran and not to undo it. The only thing which he did in this context was to condemn the un-Islamic view of Jehad and to expose its absurdity. This Jehad consists in perpeterating unprovoked aggression against non Muslims and converting them to Islam under duress. Obviously such a Jehad has no authority in the Holy Quran or the traditions of the Holy Prophet (peace and blessings of God be on him), and as such must he condemned. We showed in our article that by so doing the Promised Messiah had indeed rendered a priceless service to the cause of Islam.

In the present article we want to take up another issue on the basis of which also, the Promised Messiah is branded by some obscurantist type of maulawis as a Kafir. This issue concerns with the life and death of Jesus christ.

The Promised Messiah declared that Jesus Christ did not die on the cross. He only swooned on it and was wrongly taken for dead. He was brought down from the cross alive, kept in a spacious cave, where his wounds were treated with an ointment which was specially prepared for him and which has been known ever since in the books of medicine as Marham-Issa. Jesus recovered and subsequently repaired to Kashmir where he preached his gospels to the lost sheep of Israel and where he died in his ripe old age. The Promised Messiah identified his tomb in Mohallah Khanyar, Srinager.

Now there was nothing in this view upon which Maulvis should have raised such a hue and cry and agitated the Muslim mind throughout the length and breadth of the Indo - Pak sub-continent. The fate of Jesus Christ does not form an article of faith with a Muslim. Moreover the stand taken by the Promised Messiah is exactly the same as was upheld by the renowned companions of the Holy Prophet himself, (peace and blessings of God be on him).

The story is well known among

اعلم ما فی نفسک ، انک انت علام الغیوب .

ما قلت لهم الا ما امرتنی به ان اعبدوا الله ربی و ربکم ، و کنت علیهم شهیدا ما دمت فیهم ، فلما توفیتنی کنت انت الرقیب علیهم ، و انت علی کل شیٔ شهید .

And when Allah will say, 'O Jesus son of Mary, didst thou say to men 'Take me and my mother for two Gods besides Allah' He will answer, 'Holy art thou, I could never say that which I had no right. If I had said it, thou wouldst surely have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind, and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is Thou alone who art the knower of all hidden things.

I said nothing to them except that which Thou didst command me worship Allah, my Lord and Your Lord. And I was a witness over them as long as I remained among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the watcher over them, and Thou are witness over all things. (5 : 117 - 118).

In these verses, Jesus affirms that as long as he was alive, his followers had not gone astray. But his followers have gone astray so it conclusively follows that he is dead, for, as the verse points out it was after his death that he was to be deified. The verse also clearly shows that the self same Jesus will not come back on this earth for he expresses utter ignorance of the fact of his followers having taken him and

Muslim circles that when the Holy Prophet died, his followers were smitten with such a deep grief that some of them especially Hazrat umar, would not have it as true. Hazrat Umar is reported to have declared to decapitate anyone who would dare to pronounce it. He was of the op nion that Holy Prophet had gone to the skies temporarily and would return soon. But Hazrat Abu Bakr looked on the matter dispassionately and proclaimed that the Holy Prophet had actually died. He recited the verse.

و ما محمد الا رسول قد خلت من قبله الرسل

"And Muhammad is but a Messenger, verily all messengers have passed away before him". (3 ; 145).

This came as a stunning shock to Hazrat Umar and he fell down under its weight. Now if the companions had believed in the bodily ascension of Jesus, they would have repudiated Hazrat Abu Bakr's stand. But they became calm and quiet. Is it not a cogent proof of the fact that the companions of the Holy Prophet were very clear in their minds that no prophet before the Holy Prophet had survived.

Then the Holy Quran is full of verses which clearly state that like any other mortal Jesus Christ died a natural death on this very earth. The Holy Quran says :

و اذ قال الله یعیسی ابن مریم ء أنت قلت للناس اتخذونی و امی الهین من دون الله قال سبحنک ما یکون لی ان اقول ما لیس لی بحق ، ان کنت قلته فقد علمته ، تعلم ما فی نفسی و لا

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his motther for two Gods after he had left them. Had he come back he would not have given such a statement, for in that case it would have amounted to a veritable lie.

The Quran is so clear about the death of Jesus that quite recently, SHALTUT the Rector of Al-Azhar University, Cairo, had also to give his verdict in its favour. But still some Moulvis stick to their unreasonable stand and make it a basis for branding the Promised Messiah as Kafir. What a pity!

Has not the time come for giving an unbiased consideration to this question. If justice is done to it a discerning mind will find that by proclaiming the death of Jesus Christ the Promised Messiah has done a great service to the cause of Islam. In fact, by this one stroke, he has demolished the edifice of Christianity. For, if Jesus is dead, there is no ascension, no atonement and in reality no Christianity. This is the bridge which leads a Christian from Christianity to Islam. This is the point which when a Muslim preacher drives home to a christian, the latter has no choice left to him, except of considering Islam seriously.

EXPORTERS

OF

BOOKS ON

ISLAM

The Oriental & Religious Publishing Corporation Ltd.
Rabwah, Pakistan.

Farwell-Poem

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for an Imam departing from Mauritius

HUDAYATULLAH HUBSCH

His humour never left him
And nor his faith got dim
He always helped all men
With deeds and with his pen
His temper was so sweet
As if a bird we meet
And in his company
You suddenly feel free
Of worries, for his smile
Made you for a long while
Thinking about Islam
And the Messiah's Ilham
He's leaving now but all
Hope that one day the call
Of this dear island in the sun
Receives him back as a real son

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RABWAH

Deliverance from The Cross

Ahmadiyya Muslim Mission in England has recently published "Deliverance from the Cross" by Chauahry Muhammad Zafrullah Khan, Ex- President of the United Nations. The booklet offers a deep insight into the life and death of Jesus Christ and is being serially reproduced in Tahrik-i-Jadid. Below is its 2nd & 3rd chapters, dealing with the Ministry and Death of Jesus Christ. (Ed.)

— II —

Ministry

Jesus was the last prophet in Israel. He was called the son of God, an expression that was in common use in scripture but was always employed metaphorically and in no single instance did it connote God. Nowhere in the Gospels or the Epistles is it said that Jesus referred to himself as God or implied that he was God. The expression, Lord, was applied to him but there is no evidence that those who made use of this expression with reference to him believed, or meant to convey, that he was God. It was used as a synonym for master.

It was long after his time that the expression son of God was transmuted into God, the Son, meaning thereby that Jesus was the second person in the Trinity. The entire concept of the Trinity was foreign to the thinking of Jesus. He always referred to himself as having been *sent* by God, meaning that he was a divine messenger. For instance:

This is life eternal, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent (John 17 : 3).

I can of mine own self do nothing, as I hear I judge and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will. but the will of the Father which hath sent me)John, 5:30).

I have greater witness than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me (John 5 : 36).

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me (John 5 : 37).

Ye have not His word abiding in you: for whom He hath sent, him ye believe not (John : 39).

He that sent me is true (John 8:26).

Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me; for I proceeded forth and come from God; neither came I myself, but He sent me (John 8 : 42).

They have believed that Thou didst send me (John 17 : 8).

For I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me...And this is the will of Him that

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Tahrik-i-Jadid

sent me...(John 6 : 38—40).

It is clear, therefore, that Jesus consistently put himself forward as one who had been sent by God, that is to say, as a messenger of God. In fact, his function as a messenger of God was defined even before his birth by divine direction as set out both in the Gospel and in the Quran. The angel that appeared to Mary and told her that she would bear a son whom she should name Jesus also informed her that God would give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob (Luke I 32—3). The Quran affirms that Mary was told that God would teach Jesus the Book and the Wisdom and the Torah and the Gospel and would make him a messenger to the children of Israel (3 : 49—50). It is true that in Luke 1 : 32, he is called the son of the Highest and in 1 : 35, the son of God; but these expressions in Biblical idiom do not at all connote Divinity or partnership in Divinity. In Psalms, 82 : 6 we read; 'I have said, ye are gods; and all of you are the children of the most High.'

In numerous instances the expression son of God is applied to prophets, to the righteous and to believers. The following are only some examples out of many:

Israel is My son, even My first-born (Exodus 4 : 22).

Also I will make him (David) My first born. higher than the king of the earth (Psalms 89 : 27).

He (Solomon) shall be My son, and I will be his father (1 Chron. 22 : 10).

Now, My son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thee, and build the house of Lord thy God, as he has said of thee (1 Chron. 22 : 11).

Now, My son, the Lord be with thee; and prosper thee, and build the house of Lord, thy God, as he has said of thee (1 Chron. 22 : 11).

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God (Matt. 5 : 9).

That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven (Matt. 5 : 45).

But as many as received him, to them he gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe in his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God (John 1 : 12—13).

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the spirit of adoption whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together (Romans 8 : 14—17).

Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God (John 3 : 1).

More significant than all this is the explanation furnished by Jesus himself, which is as follows:

Then the Jews took up stones again to stone him. Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from my Father; for which of

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those works do you stone me? The Jews answered him, saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that thou, being man, makest thyself God (John 10 : 31—33).

Now here the crucial question was directly posed to Jesus. Did he claim to be God. the second person in the Trinity, as he subsequently came to be represented? His answer must be accepted by all those who profess to believe in him and to follow him.

Jesus answered them, Is it not written in your law, I said, ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came, and the scripture cannot be broken; say ye of him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and sent into the world, thou blasphemeth; because I said, I am the son of God (John 10 : 34-7)?

For-as-much then as we are the offspring of God (Acts 17 : 29).

This makes it quite clear that the expression son of God when applied to Jesus, by himself or by others, meant no more in his case than it means in its application to others in scripture, of which we have set out several instances above. He was son of God in that sense, but in no wise at all God, the Son, the second person in the Trinity as it is now claimed.

It is contended however, that in the same context Jesus had also said: I and my Father are one (John 10 : 30) and; the Father is in me, and I in him (John 10 : 39); and that these affirmations lend support to the claim made on his behalf that he was not merely the son of God in the biblical idiom, but had relationship with God which elevated him to the Godhead and made him a partner and an associate with God on an equal footing. We shall now proceed to show that in the idiom of the Bible the expressions relied upon do not carry the matter any further and do not furnish the least evidence of the divinity of Jesus. For instance:

At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me and I in you (John 14 : 20).

That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: That the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one: and that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them as thou hast loved me (John 17 21-3)

He that knoweth not the Son knoweth not the Father which hath sent him (John 5 : 23)

He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life John (5 24).

One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all, and in you all (Ephesians 4 : 6).

The distinction between God and Jesus was well understood among the disciples and the early Christians, as would be appreciated from the following:

For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ, Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh (Phil. 3 : 3).

But to us there is but one God, the Father, of Whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ by whom are all things and

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we by him (1 Cor. 8 6).

Jesus himself brought out the distinction clearly in attributing divinity to God alone, Who was also his God, as for instance: Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God (John 20 : 17).

Jesus had not the slightest hesitation in affirming the Unity of God. For instance:

One of the scribes came.....and asked him, which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear O Israel, the Lord, our God, is One Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: This is the first commandment.....And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master thou hast said the truth: for there is One God; and there is none other but He (Mark 12 : 29-30 & 32).

God alone is immortal: the blessed and only potentate, King of kings, and Lord of lords; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach; Whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting (1 Tim. 6 : 15-16).

The doctrine of the Trinity necessarily imports the complete equality in all respects of three persons of the Trinity, for if there were inequality in any respect between them that would mean the superiority of one over the other two or the superiority of two over the third, in which case the one, or the two, that lacked equality could not be God; the one who had superiority over the other two would be God of the universe, including the other two. Even a cursory study of the Gospe's and the Epistles that in respect of the attributes of which there is a record the Father is supreme and there is a disclaimer by Jesus of those attributes.

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For instance, God alone is the true source of honour, as is said: How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only' (John 5:44)? This finds support in the Quran: 'Whoso seeks honour should realise that all honour belongs to God' (35 : 11).

All holiness belongs to God alone, as is said: 'And' behold one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? There is none good but One, that is God: But if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments' (Matt. 19 : 16—17

Jesus disclaimed absolute power. When Zebedee asked him to grant that her two sons may sit, the one on his right hand, and the other on his left hand, in his kingdom, the reply given by him was: 'To sit on my right hand, and on my left is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father'. (Matt. 20 : 23).

His knowledge was not co-extensive with the knowledge of God. Concerning the day and hour of his second coming, after setting out certain signs, he said: But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father (Mark 13 : 32).

The Quran affirms that God's knowledge comprehends all that is in the heavens and in the earth but that man's knowledge is limited to that much which God bestows upon him; He knows all that is before them

and all that is behind them, and they cannot compass aught of His knowledge, except that which He pleases. His knowledge extends over the heavens and the earth, and the care of them wearies Him not. He is the Most High, the Most Great' (2:256).

Apparently, not only Jesus lacked equality with God he also lacked equality with the third person in the Trinity, the Holy Ghost, as he said: Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come' (Matt. 12:31—2).

The Quran lays down that all prayer is to be addressed to God: 'Unto Him is the true prayer. Those on whom they call beside Him, do not respond to them at all' (13:15). Jesus had the habit of prayer. As for instance: 'He withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed' (Luke 5:16). He took Peter and John and James and went up into a mountain to pray' (Luke 9:28). 'And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive' (Matt. 21:22). 'It came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples, and he said unto them, when ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name...' (Luke 11 1—2).

Thus quite rightly all his supplications and those of his disciples were addreseed to God. Obviously, therefore there was not equality between the supplicant and Him to Whom supplication was addressed. God had the power to respond to supplication and to grant it. Quite obviously Jesus lacked such power, for indeed if he had possessed that power his supplicating God would have been meaningless. Had he been the second person in the Trinity, and therefore, God, he would have been in no need of supplication, as he would have had the power to do all that he wished. This is well illlustrated in his repeated supplications in the garden of Gethsemnge, when he fell on his face and prayed, saying, 'O my Father if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will. but as thou wilt' (Matt. 26:39). To the particular significance of this supplication we shall advert later. Our purpose here is to demonstrate the relationship between Jesus and God which was that between a righteous servant and his gracious Master. Nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt; is a clear affirmation of the supremacy of the Divine will over the will of Jesus which was subordinate to the will of God. As he himself affirmed, he had been sent not to do his own will but to do God's will (John 6:38); which is an exact description of the relationship between God and a Prophet.

As a contrast, there is no mention of the Father ever supplicating the Son, which is clear proof that the Father is supreme and the son is subordinate to Him, as a servant is subordinate to his master.

Assuming that there had been complete equality between the three persons of the Trinity in every respect, status, knowledge, power and all the other attributes of the Divine, this would only have led to confusion and conflict of the type of which we read in the mythologies of certain creeds, for the situation would present insoluble dilemma. If one of them had authority to control the others,

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that would mean the subordination of the others to him, and thus equality would be negated. If there were no control there would be conflict. If there were complete identity of wills between all three and of everything else, there would be redundance. As the Quran has said: If there had been in the heavens and the earth other gods beside God then surely both would have gone to ruin. Then glorified be God, the Lord of the Throne, above that which they ascribe to Him. He cannot be questioned concerning what He does but they will be questioned. (21 : 23-4)

Jesus called the attention of his opponents to the fact that Moses had propheised about his coming. He said: 'For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?' (John 5 : 46-7).

It is claimed that there are several prophecies in the Torah and other books of the Bible concerning the advent of Jesus, and that the Jews were awaiting the advent of the Messiah when Jesus began his ministry. It is those prophecies to which Jesus was seeking to draw their attention when he referred to the writings of Moses. What is significant for our present purpose is that all those prophecies had reference to the advent of a prophet and not to the advent of God in the capacity of the second person of the Trinity.

The Truth of the matter clearly is that Jesus was the last prophet in Israel, a believer in Moses and all the prophets of Israel who followed after Moses. He was bound by the Mosaic law and adhered to it. It is true that he often set forth its true import in contrast with its letter, but that was the exercise of his prophetic function. He did not mean, and had no authority, to abrogate the Mosaic law or any part of it. This he made quite clear in his emphatic declaration:

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the Kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5 : 17—19).

That is why he told the one who had asked what good thing should he do, that he may have eternal life, to keep the commandments; by which he clearly meant the commandments of the Mosaic law.

His ministry as a prophet was confined to the Bani Israel. He was the heir to the throne of David and was to reign over the house of Jacob (Luke 1:32—3). His own conception of the character of his ministry was manifested clearly in the following incident:

Behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O lord, thou son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil. But he answered her not a word. and his disciples came and besought him, saying, send her away; for she crieth after us. But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the

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children's bread and to cast it to dogs. And she said, Truth, Lord: Yet the dogs eat out of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour (Matt. 15 22-8).

This account sets forth clearly and positively that Jesus was a Messenger of God sent unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel and that the scope of his ministry did not extend beyond the children of Israel. The woman of Canaan is said to have worshipped him at one stage, but her worship amounted to no more than an entreaty for help, so that the expression worshipped has been used instead of beseeched. The verse could well have run. Then came she and prayed him to help her. Be that as it may, the manifestation on her part of extreme reverence for Jesus did not invest Jesus with divinity, and his response to her entreaty was even more emphatic than his first response, exhibiting an extreme degree of contempt for the Gentiles. He did not consider it fitting to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs. The contempt apart, it leaves no room for speculating that his mission as a Messenger could have included within its scope anyone outside the house of Israel. His yielding to her entreaties in the end was no indication that he had misconceived the scope of his mission and that now he had a better understanding of its extent. It meant only that he had been moved to compassion by the depth and sincerity of her faith in him. His mission was a beneficent one, and, and even if a non Israeli believed in him sincerely it would do him no harm, and nothing but good could proceed from it.

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It is said that on another occasion he had exhorted his disciples to carry his message into all the towns and villages and to all the people, but there is nothing to indicate that by all the towns and villages and all the people he meant anything more than all the towns and villages of the Bani Israel and the whole of the Jewish people.

He clearly directed his disciples to that effect, as would appear from: These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel (Matt. 10:5-6).

Thus, the concept of Trinity finds no support from anything that Jesus is reported to have said. It is a concept which bewilders reason, offends conscience, and affronts Divine Majesty. It is utterly inconsistent with the concept of the Godhead.

A body of distinguished Anglican theologians have described it as a myth, meaning,

a story which is told but which is not literally true or an idea or an image which is applied to someone or something but which does not literally apply, but which invites a particular attribute in its hearers..... that Jesus was God the Son Incarnate, is not literaly true, since it has no literal meaning, but it is an application to Jesus of a mythical concept whose function is analogous to that of the notion of divine sonship ascribed in the ancient world to a king (The Myth of God Incarnate, Preface, p. ix).

The writers of this book are convinced that another major theological development is called for in this last part of the twentieh century. The need arises from growing knowledge of Christian origins and involves a recognition that Jesus was (as he is presented in Acts 2 : 22) 'a man

approved by God' for a special role within the divine purpose, and that the later conception of him as God incarnate, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, living a human life, is a mythological or poetic way of ex-expressing his significance for us. This recognition is called for in the interests of truth ; but it also has increasingly important practical implication for our relationship to the peoples of the other great world religions. (Ibid, p. 178).

God is not subject to the contingencies of birth and death. He is Ever-living and neither begets, nor is begotten The Quran sets forth a true concept of Him which does not in any way diminish, confine or limit Him. For instance.

He is God, the Single ; God, the Self-Existing and Besought of all. He begets not nor is He begotten ; and there is none like unto Him (112 : 2-5).

Put my trust in the one Who is Ever-living and is the source of life, Who dies not, and glorify Him with His praise (25 : 59).

The Quran utterly and emphatically rejects the concept of the Trinity. For instance :

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They allege : The Gracious One has taken unto Himself a son. Assuredly, you have uttered a monstrous thing ! The heavens might well nigh burst thereat, and the earth cleave asunder, and the mountains fall down in pieces, because they ascribe a son to the Gracious One ; whereas it becomes not the Gracious One to take unto Himself a son. There is no one in the heavens and the earth but he shall come to the Gracious One as a bondman (19 : 89-94).

All praise belongs to God, Who has sent down the Book to His servant, free from all distortion, full of truth and guidance that it may give warning of a grievous chastisement proceeding from Him, and that it may give the believers who work righteousness the glad tidings that they shall have a good reward which they shall enjoy forever. And that it may warn those who say : God has taken unto Himself a son. They have no knowledge whatever concerning it, nor had their fathers Grievous is the assertion that they make. They only utter a falsehood (18 : 2 6).

We sent no Messenger before thee but We directed him : There is no God but I ; so worship Me alone. But they say : The Gracious One has taken to Himself a son. Holy is He. Those whom they so designate are only His honoured servants. They utter not a word more than He directs, and they only carry out His commands. He knows what lies ahead of them and what is left behind them, and they intercede not except only he whose intercession He permits, and they tremble with fear of Him. Whosoever of them should say : I am a god beside Him ; We shall requite him with hell. Thus do We requite the wrongdoers (21 : 26-30).

Keep in mind, when God will ask Jesus, son of Mary : Didst thou say to the people : Take me and my mother for two gods beside Allah? And he will answer : Holy art Thou. It behoves me not to have said that to which I have no right. Had I said it, Thou wouldst surely have known it. Thou knowest what is in my mind. and I know not what is in Thy mind. It is only Thou Who possessest full knowledge of all that is hidden. I said naught to them except that which Thou didst command me, that is : Worship God my Lord and your Lord. I

watched over them as long as I was present among them, but since Thou didst cause me to die, Thou hast been the One to watch over them. Indeed Thou dost watch over all things. If Thou decide to punish them they are Thy servants ; and if Thou forgive them, then surely Thou art the Mighty, the Wise (5 : 117-19).

People of the Book ! exceed not the bounds in the matter of your religion, and say not of God anything but the truth. Indeed, the Messiah, Jesus, son of Mary, was but a Messenger of God and the fulfilment of glad tidings which He conveyed to Mary and a mercy from Him. So believe in God and His Messengers and say not : There are three gods. Desist, it will be better for you. Indeed, God is the only One God. His Holiness brooks not that He should have a son. To Him belongs whatever is in the heavens and whatever is in the earth. Sufficient is God as a Guardian. Surely, the Messiah would never disdain to be accounted a servant of God, nor would the angels who are close to God. Those who disdain to worship Him and consider themselves above it will He gather all together before Himself (4 : 172 3).

Those certainly are disbelievers who say : God is none but the Messiah, son of Mary ; whereas the Messiah himself taught - Children of Israel, worship God Who is my Lord and your Lord. Surely God has forbidden heaven to him who associates partners with God, and the Fire will be his resort. The wrongdoers shall have no helpers. Those certainly are disbelievers who say : God is the third of three. There is no one worthy of worship but the One God. If they desist not from that which they say, a grievous chastisement shall surely afflict those of them that disbelieve. Will they not then turn to God and beg His forgiveness, seeing that God is Most Forgiving, Ever Merciful (5 : 73-5).

The Messiah, son of Mary, was only a Messenger, Many Messengers have passed away before him. His mother was a paragon of truth and t ey both were in need of and ate food. Observe how We explain the Signs for their benefit, then observe how they are led away. Ask them : Do you worship beside God that which has no power to do you harm or good ? It is God Who is All-Hearing, All-Knowing. Admonish them : People of the Book, exceed not the bounds in the matter of your religion unjustly, nor follow the vain desires of a people who themselves went astray before and caused many others to go astray, and who strayed away from the right path (5 : 76-8).

The subject of God and His attributes, through which alone a true concept of Him may be formed, is vast and limitless. The Quran sets forth a wealth of instruction concerning divine attributes and their operation. It is not necessary for our present purpose to embark upon a detailed discussion of the subject. By way of illustration, however, attention might be drawn to the following passage which should be studied and pondered with great care :

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God is He besides Whom there is no god, the Sovereign, the Most Holy the source of Peace, the Bestower of Security, the Protector, the Mighty, the Subduer, the Exalted. Holy is God, far above that which they associate with Him. He is God, the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner ; His are the most beautful names. All that is in the heavens and the earth glorifies Him. He is the Mighty, the Wise (59 : 23-5).

Man is desirous of righteous progeny to help him in his old age, to carry on his name and the family after his death, and to bring him posthumous honour. God is Ever-living, Self-subsisting and Self-sustaining. All that is in heaven and earth belongs to him, obeys Him and glorifies Him. What need has He of a son? What can a son do for Him that He cannot do Himself? To attribute a son to Him, as a partner in the Godhead, would be to offer the gravest affornt to Him.

Death

The Jews claimed that they had compassed the death of Jesus on the cross and that, therefore, he had become accursed in accordance with the pronouncement contained in Deut. 21:23, and thus could not be a true prophet.

The Christians affirm that though Jesus had died on the cross, he rose from the dead on the third day, met his disciples on certain occaisons and was then received into heaven.

The Quran does not accept either claim. The death of Jesus, whether upon the cross, or later in the natural course, has continued to be a subject of controversy over the centuries. The truth of the matter is of fundamental importance with regard to the beliefs and doctrines of the Jews, the Christians, and the Muslims. A study of the question and of the evidence available must be carried out with the utmost care and in a reverent spirit.

Jesus had in a manner made a prophecy which is very apposite to the problem. We read:

Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the Prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth (Matt. 12:38-40).

And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: They seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas, the Prophet. For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the son of man be to this generation (Luke 11:28-30).

Thus, the sign that was predicted by Jesus was that as the Prophet Jonas was in the belly of the whale for a certain period, so shall the son of man be in the heart of the earth for a period. The essence of the sign was not the period. It will be noted that the version in Luke makes no mention of the period but only of the sign of Jonas.

What was the sign of the Prophet Jonas? It was that he entered the belly of the whale alive, and remained therein alive, and came out thereof alive. Thus, Jesus prophecied that he would enter the heart of the earth alive, would remain there alive and would come out thereof alive. This meant that the design of his enemies would be frustrated and that they would not succeed in putting him to death on the cross. This is the key to the complicated and poignant drama of the crucifixion.

This is how the account of it opens:

Then cometh Jesus with them

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unto a place cllaed Gethsemane and saith unto the disciples, sit ye here, while, I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: Tarry here, and watch with me. And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is week. He went away again the second time and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, Thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. And he left them and went away again, prayed the third time, saying the same words (Matt. 26:33-44).

Quite understandably Jesus a sincere servant of God and a true prophet, was much agitated over the prospect of being condemned to death by crucifixion, for apart from the suffering involved, such a denouement would forever become a barrier to the Jews believing in him as the Messiah, as they would deem his death accursed. Therefore, he supplicated repeatedly in agony that he might be delivered from death on the cross. And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: 'And his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground' (Luke 22:24). As a true prophet, he realised that his duty was to approach God humbly for deliverance, as for instance, the Holy Prophet supplicated humbly and passionately before the Battle of Badar. Both hoped and believed that their respective prayers would be accepted, yet their souls were in travail before the awful majesty of God Who alone had full knowledge of his Own designs. That is why Jesus added to his supplication: Nevertheless, not as I will, but as Thou wilt. He was fully conscious that he had to conform to and carry out the divine will, whatever it might be. Incidentally, this attitude confirms that his relationship with God was that of a prophet and not that of an equal partner in the Godhead.

He had full confidence that his prayer would be accepted, as he had himself told his disciples:

And all things, whatsoever, ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive (Matt. 21:22).

And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it that they may believe that thou hast sent me (John 11:42).

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death and was heard in that he feared (Heb. 5:7).

Indeed his prayer was accepted: and there appeared an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him' (Luke 22:43). Thus Jesus knew that he would be delivered from death upon the cross, though he did not know how it would come about. His enemies had devised a plan for his ruin and God devised His plan for his deliverance, as is said in the Quran:

The enemies of Jesus devisea their plans and God devised His plan; God is the Best of planners. God

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Tahrik-i-Jadid

reassured Jesus ; I shall cause thee to die a natural death, and shall exalt thee to Myself, and shall clear thee from the calumnies of those who disbelieve, and shall place those who follow thee above those who disbelieve, until the Day of Judgment ; then to Me shall be your return and I will judge between you concerning that wherein you differ (3 : 55-6).

The plan of God was bound to be carried out successfully, it could not be frustrated.

Soon after his supplications in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus was apprehended, whereupon one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest and smote off his ear, on which Jesus rebuked him and said :

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels ? But how than shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be (Matt. 26 : 51-4).

All this makes it clear that Jesus supplicated most earnestly to be delivered from death upon the cross and was reassured in answer to his supplications that God would deliver him from such a death. A question, however arises that calls for an answer from those who believe that Jesus was a partner in the Godhead and had appeared in human form to lay down his life on the cross so as to become an atonement for sins of mankind. If that were so, his death upon the cross would be the fulfilment of the very purpose of his coming and he would welcome its approach rather than seek to be delivered from it. Indeed, as a partner in the Godhead, he was in no need of any supplication but if, nevertheless, he did supplicate his supplication would be acted upon, he would be delivered from death upon the cross and would thus himself frustrate the very purpose of his coming. His supplications in the garden of Gethsemane, therefore, furnish a complete refutation of the fiction that he was a partner in the Godhead and had come into the world to become an atonement for the sins of mankind.

Having been apprehended, they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas, the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled. He was questioned by the high priest and at the end of the interrogation the high priest rent his clothes, saying,

He hath spoken blasphemy ; what further need have we of witnesses ? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye ? They answered and said, he is guilty of death (Matt. 26 : 65-6). When they had bound him, they led him away and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor (Matt. 27 : 2)

When Pilate was set down on the judgment seat, his wife sent unto him, saying have thou nothing to do with that just man : for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him (Matt. 27 : 19).

This was clearly divine intervention on behalf of Jesus and the first step in the divine plan to deliver him from death upon the cross. There is no instance in the history of religion where divine intervention, even through a dream, has ever been frustrated of its purpose. That the dream of Pilate's wife was a true one and was inspired by God is clear from the fact that she was

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informed that Jesus was a just man, that is to say, he was righteous.

That the purpose of such a dream cannot be frustrated had already been manifested through a dream which was aimed at securing the safety of Jesus when he was still a baby.

Behold the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: and was there until the death of Herod (Matt. 2:13-15). But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel (Matt. 2:19-21).

This meant that no harm could have come to the child in Egypt as he would be under divine protection. In the same way, the purpose of the dream seen by Pilate's wife was to adopt a favourable attitude towards Jesus whereby the divine purpose for his deliverance from death upon the cross might be facilitated and carried in to effect. The attitude of Pilate was affected in accordance with the divine intent, as is said: 'And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him' (John 19:12).

Pilate questioned Jesus but found nothing amiss with him. It was the time of the feast of the Passover and at that feast the Governor was to release unto people a prisoner whom they would. And they had then a notable prisoner called Barabbas.

Therefore, when they were gathered together, Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus, which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered him (Matt. 27:15:18). But the Chief priest and the elders persuaded the multitude that they should ask for Barabbas, and destroy Jesus. The Governor answered and said unto them, Whether of the twain will ye that I release unto you? They said, Barabbas. Pilate saith unto them, What shall I do then with Jesus, which is called Christ? They all say unto him, Let him be crucified. And the Governor said, Why what evil hath he done? But they cried out the more, saying, Let him be crucified. When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it. Then answered all the people and said, His blood be on us, and on our children (Matt. 27:20-5).

(To be continued)

The Promised Messiah says:

كل بركة من محمد صلى الله عليه وسلم

فبارك من علم و تعلم

"Every grace comes from Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be on him. Blessed, therefore, is he who taught and he who learnt."

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